

2 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of the Lower Green River Baseline Habitat Survey conducted as part of the WRIA 9 Strategic Assessment in Washington's watershed planning process. This project focused on documenting current instream and adjacent riparian habitat conditions in and along the mainstem Lower Green River, from RM 32.1 to RM 5.7, just upstream from the Duwamish Turning Basin (Figure 2-1).

Data collected in this project will serve as baseline habitat condition information along the Lower Green River. By characterizing current habitat conditions in and along the Lower Green River, current survey data will be useful in multiple aspects of salmon recovery planning, including:

- Comparison of current and historical habitat conditions in WRIA 9
- Identification of potential protection and restoration strategies in the Lower Green River sub-watershed.
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of habitat restoration projects and the long-term effects of other factors affecting the sub-watershed (for example, land use changes) on habitat along the mainstem Lower Green River.
- Interpretation of an ongoing juvenile chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) growth and survival study in the Lower Green River currently being carried out by King County for the WRIA 9 Technical Committee.
- Updates to the Shoreline Master Programs of the cities of Seattle, Tukwila, Kent and Auburn, as well as King County, in order to meet new ESA and Growth Management Act mandates in addressing ESA-listed species, and in planning habitat restoration and capital improvement projects along the Lower Green River, and flood control facility repair and maintenance projects within the GRFCZD¹.

Methods used in this project were selected to be consistent with an earlier habitat assessment of the Middle Green River conducted from RM 64.5 to 32 (R2 Resource Consultants 2002). The survey area was divided into discrete reaches in order to facilitate interpretation of habitat differences within the Lower Green River.

¹ The Green River Flood Control Zone District (GRFCZD) is a quasi-municipal corporation of the State of Washington authorized by RCW 86.15, which established the King County Council as the Board of Supervisors for the GRFCZD, and granted the GRFCZD authority for flood hazard reduction elsewhere granted to counties.

The remainder of this report is organized into the following sections. An overview of historical habitat conditions and existing salmonid population information for the Lower Green River are provided in Section 3. Section 4 details the methods implemented during this habitat survey project. Section 5 presents the results of the survey and Section 6 ties the findings together with the Conclusions and Recommendations. Section 7 provides the literature cited.

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